

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINGST 05643 232212Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----122482 232215Z /70
O 232145Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7423

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 5643

EXDIS

ARA FOR TODMAN ONLY: S/AB FROM BUNKER/POPPER ONLY: NSC FOR
PASTOR ONLY

1. E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PN, JM
SUBJECT: PANAMA CANAL TREATIES

REF: A. STATE 219477; B. STATE 229091

1. THE PNP POLITICAL CONFERENCE WHICH COMMENCED SEPT 8
AND ITS EXPLOSIVE AFTERMATH HAD MADE THE PANAMA CANAL
TREATIES ALL BUT DISAPPEAR AS A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION IN JAMAICA.
HOWEVER, THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE TREATIES HAVE THE
UNANIMOUS ENDORSEMENT OF ALL SECTORS OF THE COUNTRY. WHEN
FONMIN PATTERSON, RETURNING FROM THE SIGNING CEREMONY,
ARRIVED AT THE PNP CONFERENCE WHICH WAS IN SESSION, HE WAS
GIVEN A STANDING OVATION AND THE SPEAKER TOOK THE OCCASION
TO PRAISE THE TREATIES.

2. PRIME MINISTER MANLEY'S POSITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT ANY
TREATY ACCEPTABLE TO PANAMA WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO JAMAICA.
AT THE PNP CONFERENCE HE ANNOUNCED JAMAICA'S FULL
SUPPORT FOR THE TREATIES. (FYI: A SOURCE CLOSE
TO MANLEY TOLD US THAT WHEN MANLEY HEARD THE TERMS
AT THE BOGOTA MEETING HE REMARKED THAT "USG WAS
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GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER", BUT STUCK TO HIS OFT-
REPEATED POSITION THAT HE WOULD NOT INTERPOSE ANY
NEGATIVE VIEWS IF PANAMA WAS SATISFIED.)

3. THERE IS NO QUESTION WHATSOEVER IN ANY JAMAICAN
MIND OR MINE THAT FAILURE TO RATIFY THE TREATIES WOULD
BE A SERIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL SET-BACK IN US-JAMAICAN

RELATIONS. THE TREATIES HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN UNDERVICING THE ASSERTIONS OF THE JAMAICAN RADICALS ABOUT "AMERICAN IMPERIALISM". MODERATE ELEMENTS OF THE PNP RULING PARTY HAVE USED THE TREATIES AS PROOF OF A NEW ERA IN US-LATIN AND CARIBBEAN RELATIONS AND TO VINDICATE THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF CONFIDENCE IN US AS A NATION WHICH IS NOT INIMICAL TO JAMAICAN OR OTHER LDC INTERESTS. AT THE PNP CONFERENCE, PRIIME MINISTER MANLEY DEFINED "IMPERIALISM" IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE CLEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT THE TERM DO OT APPLY TO US. IF TREATIES NOT REATIFIED, WE CAN PROBABLY EXPECT SOMEWHAT OF A RETURN TO THE UNPLEASANT SITUATION THAT CHARACTERIZED OUR RELATIONS LAST YEAR.

4. THERE WAS NO BILATERAL WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. HOWEVER, FONMIN PATTERSON'S BILATERAL WITH SECSTATE VANCE WAS CONSIDERED EXTREMELY HELPFUL BY PATTERSON, MANLEY AND OTHERS. PATTERSON'S RECEPTION BY SECSTATE GAVE HIM GREATER STATURE AND THE "COURAGE" TO SPEAK UP FOR A SOUND US-JAMAICAN RELATIONSHIP.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TREATY SIGNATURE, CANALS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KINGST05643
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770347-0415
Format: TEL
From: KINGSTON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770929/aaaaayig.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 344a5e3f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1157051
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PANAMA CANAL TREATIES
TAGS: PBOR, PN, JM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/344a5e3f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009